



2nd Forum for the Future of Agriculture - Regional Event

Madrid, May 13, 2009

New technologies

This event in Madrid continued to reflect the many themes previously discussed in Brussels and consequently produced further engaging debates. Various ELO speakers presented their views about the challenge of feeding the planet in a sustainable way, whilst ensuring that European society benefits from adequate rural development. Other speakers detailed the fundamental need for modern technologies in food production and the protection of the environment, furthermore explaining the consequences of the new EU Crop Protection legislation and regulation for Spanish agriculture.

Overall, there was a common understanding that feeding the world should mean maximising production on available cultivated land and only ploughing extra hectares when truly necessary. Therefore, in order to achieve food self sufficiency, the use of modern technologies such as machinery, fertilisers, crop protection, GMOs, and even IT must be further developed and optimised. All participants agreed that in this strategic fight against hunger, Europe has to keep a high level of food production to properly contribute to world supplies. Most of the participants felt that this can be done within a harmonious rural development without harming natural habitats. However, it was also stressed that farmers should be compensated for their provision of 'public goods' to society.